

MICHAEL P. IANNUCCI  
*presents*

ANN CORIO

*in*

THIS WAS BURLESQUE









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*presents*

**ANN CORIO**

*in*

# **THIS BURLESQUE WAS**

A Musical Satire based on  
Miss Corio's Recollections

ALSO STARRING

**STEVE MILLS**

*and*

**The Best of  
Burlesque Stars**

Choreography — **Paul Morokoff**

Costumes — **Rex Huntington**

Miss Corio's Gowns by  
**Martier-Raymond**  
and **Rex Huntington**

Entire Production Supervised and Directed  
by Miss Ann Corio







# How Burlesque Came Back to New York

by Joe Di Mona







There exists in the New York area today at least eight million men who played hookey in their Senior Year at High School to see a burlesque show. Almost all of them went to see Ann Corio. And today almost all of them are playing hookey again — from the office — to see her in the smash hit nostalgic review, "This Was Burlesque."

The audience was there . . . the demand could have been anticipated . . . but it took a young man who had never seen a burlesque show in his life to bring the show to New York. Mike Iannucci, whose previous experience was one year as a Summer Stock producer and a few weeks as a football player for the Pittsburgh Steelers, was the unlikely candidate for a very special Show Business Hall of Fame. The man who, with Ann Corio, brought burlesque back to New York.

When he began it seemed impossible. Mayor LaGuardia had banned burlesque in 1942. So there was the legal problem. On top of that, wise show people of all categories were categorically sure of one thing: Slapstick humor was dead, dead, dead. Today people wanted Mort Sahl, Bob Newhart, Shelly Berman . . . subtle comedians all . . . But baggy pants comedians in 1965, never.

Mike clung to his idea, despite everyone and everything. And for a very special reason. In his summer stock theater, Ann Corio had appeared in "Cat On A Hot Tin Roof" and the crowds broke all box-office records. Ann had always been the first to smile when people called her a great actress. Why the crowds then? Iannucci decided it was the lines they saw, and not the lines they heard, that brought the lines to the box office. And Ann Corio, one of Nature's most bountifully favored women, had the lines to attract the audiences.

And Ann had something else, too, something rare in burlesque queens . . . a gracious ladylike presence on stage which makes all her actions seem deliciously







## GLORIA LeROY

GLORIA LEROY, who has been featured at the Latin Quarter in New York, The Dunes Hotel in Las Vegas and the Carillon Hotel in Miami Beach also performs in the legitimate theatre. Her credits include leads in *Irma La Douce*, *Most Happy Fella* and *Kismet*.



## MISS DEE LIGHT

Miss Dee Light has had extensive training and experience as a ballet dancer. A native of Texas, it was inevitable that her unusual beauty and endowments would eventually lead her into her present occupation as an exotic dancer.



## LINN TEMPLE

Linn Temple is a Texas beauty who represented the Lone Star State in a national beauty contest. She is a rare performer in the sense that she has perfected the very difficult feat of tassel twirling an art that was introduced to the American Theatre by the immortal Carrie Fennell

naughty, but somehow all right even to the women in the audience. If anyone could bring burlesque back to New York, Mike decided, it was Ann Corio.

Iannucci flew to Hollywood where Ann was living in her Malibu Beach house overlooking the banks of the Pacific — and the banks where her money (earned in her day as burlesque's reigning Queen) now was stored. It didn't take much persuading to get her on a plane bound for New York, but it *would* have if she had known what lay ahead — twelve months of labor, intrigue, disappointment, discouragements and ridicule — all from the Broadway veterans who told her burlesque was dead.

In desperation, Iannucci decided to try out the show as a nightclub package, and it opened at a club in Boston, near the scene of Ann's greatest moments in burlesque, the famous old Howard Theater. But, if Ann believed in ill omens, there was another crushing blow which happened by uncanny timing right while the show was on. One day Ann paid a visit to the Old Howard and was photographed and filmed for television newsreels depicting her return. The next day she was back again — but this time in tears as she watched the Old Howard burn to the ground. One more visible evidence that burlesque belonged to a vanished past.

The show made no money in Boston. The critics were kind, but the smart boys from MCA, GAC, and William Morris shook their heads and wandered off. And now the show seemed completely hopeless.





But the idea was there . . . the audiences were waiting . . . and neither Corio nor Iannucci burned to the ground. Bouncing off their defeat at the nightclub, Ann took a small troupe of comedians and girls into a Boston burlesque house. She staged the famous "White Cargo" scene in which, while the drums thumped and the comic jumped, Ann bumped — in a sarong. Audiences stormed the theater and howled with laughter at the great burlesque sketches they had almost forgotten. And Ann Corio, close to the ashes of the Old Howard and the ashes of twelve months of effort, knew she and Mike had been right all along.

Back to New York with renewed determination, the final persuasion of some reluctant investors, together with the money of people who worked on the show, and on March 6 burlesque came back to New York. And what a homecoming!

Reviews thundered through all of the newspapers. A smash! Delightful! Hilarious! Joyful! Magazines joined in the praise. *The New Yorker* devoted its entire theatrical page to the brash new show. *Variety* still could not quite believe it. The headline on their review "(Great show)—May Catch On."

## NICOLE JAFFE

NICOLE JAFFE, our show stealing, gum chewing cutie, is a protege of Miss Corio. From Montreal, Canada, she came to New York to seek a Broadway career, the result was her present role in her first Broadway show, "This Was Burlesque." She was especially trained for her part in the show by Miss Corio, who predicts a very bright future for her. A fluent linguist, she has broadcast in German and French for Radio Free Europe. Among her many TV appearances was a recent Trials of O'Brien, several commercials and the new Griffin Show.



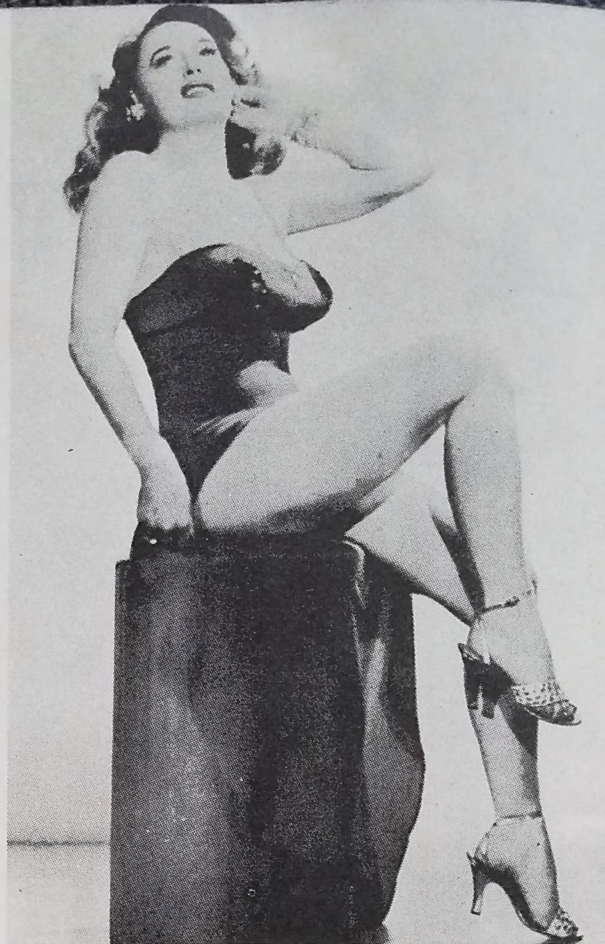




CARRIE FINNELL

"This Was Burlesque" caught on. In April noted Broadway showman Billy Rose paid the show a visit, and then spoke to Ann and Mike. He enthused about the show, but worried about the traditional audience fall-off during the hot summer months — especially in its out-of-the-way off-Broadway location.

But by then "This Was Burlesque" was the most talked-about phenomenon in a decade of New York theatrical history, and in August, when Billy had forecast possible doom, two strange things happened. In the hottest month of the year, "This Was Burlesque" was the hottest show in New York, breaking all its previous box-office records. And Ann Corio, despite the heat, went out and bought a new mink coat. At that time, we knew we were in New York to stay.



PEACHES STRANGE

LILY ST. CYR







ROSE LA ROSE



HINDA WAUSAI



GYPSY ROSE LEE

WINNIE GARRETT



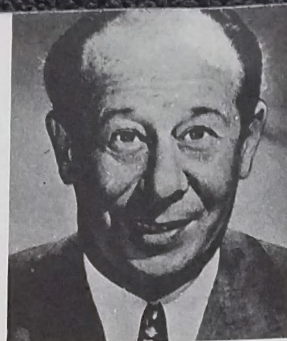
GEORGIA SOUTHERN



MARGIE HART







BERT LAHR



JIMMY DURANTE

## Baggy Pants and Putty Noses

There's not a lot of them left.

Baggy pants — yes; but putty noses — only a few!

Today's makeup for burlesque comics consists mainly of a tiny bit of grease paint, perhaps, a tampered-with rug to cover a bald pate and subbing for the old fright wigs, any number of allegedly "funny" hats, and, of course, the before mentioned baggy pants, some baggier than others.

Like Ed Wynn, who has retained the same pair of over-sized shoes for a quarter of a century, most of burlesque's funny men also retain a certain something peculiarly adopted by them in their makeups which not only distinguishes them from all the others; but has become a superstitious fetish with them as well.

It has become a standard gag backstage, to say, "All new wardrobe this season, I see; and all new material, too!" Which, of course, is a downright lie. No burley comic EVER changes his individual makeup once he has it established; and none ever use new material; because, as they put it, "why should we, the audiences haven't gotten over laughing at the old stuff, yet."

All burley comics have in their repertoire about a dozen scenes and six or more bits, with possibly half of that number also known and done by every other comic in the business. Let one comic unearth and try a new bit of business or a new gag and every other comic will also be doing it within weeks.

To keep the comedy from becoming monotonous week after week, and with the same scenes showing up too often during a season, the burlesque circuit has found it necessary to create a most unusual job, the title of which might be "director of comedy material." With this gentleman, every comic working in a given season must register his scenes in advance; and he is then told which ones he may do; and which ones are already set with other funsters. It is in this manner that some trick is kept of what the various funny

MACK DENNISON — "THE SHEIK AND HIS SLAVES"

MIKE S

BILLY HAGEN



JOEY FAYE







RANTE



MIKE SACHS

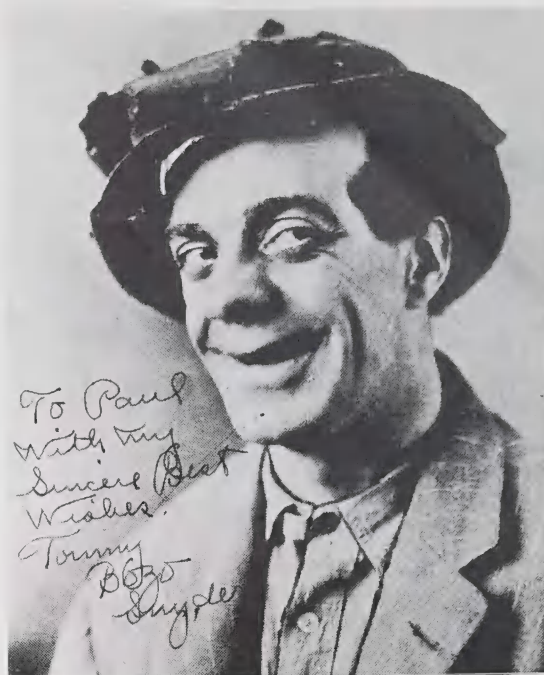
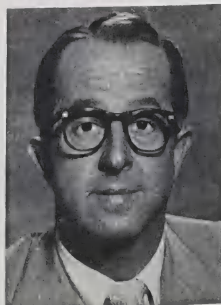
BILLY HAGEN



JOEY FAYE



PHIL SILVERS



BOZO SNYDER

SAMMY SMITH



GUS SCHILLING



BUD ABBOTT & LOU COSTELLO



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men are doing; and it is in this wise that patrons of burlesque in any given house or city do not see variations of "Irish Justice," the ol' courtroom scene, every week in the year.

There are a few comedians, however, who do make an effort to unearth new scenes and material, and these are the boys who soon find themselves being tapped on the shoulder for musical comedy, night club work, and other things theatrical.

However, most of the dyed in the wool burlesquers stay with it — without changing a gesture, a single line, or an eye-pencil mark of make-up — year after year. It seems to be what the people want — and what they want the buffons are out to deliver. Eventually the old stuff becomes so old it is new all over again — or are those laughs just echoes?

The comics, though, are the backbone of any burlesque show. The boys with the solid 12 to 15 minute scenes that play just like a two-reel comedy in the movies have been and still are one of the mainstays of this branch of show business. When the "boys" have the slapstick, risqué, situation stuff down perfectly, they develop into the "body" of the shows, which, when spaced with the "body" of a top stripper or two, makes for not only a good show; but "no show like a burlesque show."

Ludicrous, ridiculous, slapstick, satire, and, above all, a bit of the naughty gleam in the eye — plus dyed in the wool individual personality — all of these are the essence of the burley comic boys.

"Gotta Get A Girl," "At The Doctor's Office," "Getting Arrested," "Army Drill," "Betcha Two To One," "Goodbye, Old Bed"; and many, many more are scenes as well known to burlesque devotees as they are to burlesque comics; but since the laughs can still be heard above the water running in the dressing rooms they'll be repeated again and again until there is absolute silence at their rendition. Many a comic has died; but the comedy seems to go on forever. There is always somebody to whom it is all new.



BUSTER KEATON

W. C. FIELDS



FANN

WILL



# Burlesque Hall of Fame

FANNY BRICE



THE RITZ BROTHERS



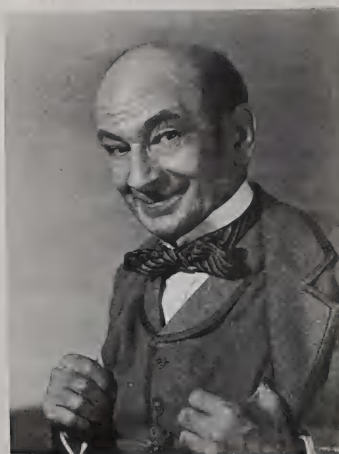
WILL ROGERS



EDDIE CANTOR



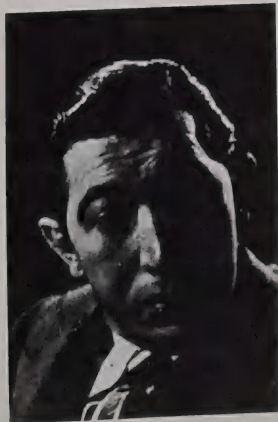
LEON ERROLL



BILLY GILBERT



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# ANN CORIO



Ann Corio is back in the headlines once more with the scheduled opening of her "This Was Burlesque" at the Casino East Theatre, 189 Second Avenue, on March 1st, 1962. The show is based on Miss Corio's reminiscences of her burlesque career.

A study of the newspaper clips on Ann Corio makes it difficult to decide whether she is better to look at or listen to.

The Journal-American describes her as:

"Standing 5'6", weighing 125 pounds, curves in the right places, luxuriant brown hair and that 'Certain Something' which turned a chorus girl into a national institution.

"From Sunday school teacher to rolling up a reputation as a darling of the diplomatic set are but a few of her accomplishments."

Her figure hasn't changed during the years and she insists that the newspapers see both her recent photographs and those from her earliest days in show-business. (Before and now picture.)

Another newspaper said about the girl who was christened Anna Maria Corio:

"Her eyes twinkle when she tells a funny experience. Her voice is soft and yet vibrant and her laugh is the kind that makes you want to join in. There is nothing upstage about Ann Corio."

A Boston reviewer described:

"The real Ann Corio whose shrewd brain created the much publicized person who shares her name and body. The Anna Maria Corio who is now fighting for the salvation of the artistic soul of Ann Corio, most famous as well as the most beautiful of all strip-teasers."

Miss Corio has the Harvard students to thank for a good part of her fame. There was a saying among the Harvard men that: "You can't graduate until you have seen Ann Corio." Many of these Harvard men, who are still her fans, now hold high positions in Washington.

The start of the Ann Corio Legend was in Hartford, Connecticut.

Ann's first stage appearance was at the age of 8 in a church play, she was the star and insisted that the part be the biggest in the show. Her acting career in the dramas was stopped by her mother when she was 12. Her mother worried about the intensity of Ann's interest in acting and demanded that she do all of her emoting for her dolls.

Ann was determined to go on the stage. Her mother was equally insistent however that Ann finish high school.

Her first professional appearance was winning a dance contest in a local theatre at the age of 15. With the first prize came an offer of a job in the chorus of a show at \$35.00 per week.

Getting the job was simple, getting Mama Corio's permission was much more difficult. Mrs. Corio made a trip to the theater in person and got individual pledges from the manager, entire cast and backstage crew that each would personally and with their life look out for the safety, and welfare, of her little girl.

"Mama didn't know it was burlesque," says Ann Corio. "We didn't even know what the word meant as we didn't have burlesque in Hartford."

"A kind friend," she continues, "told Mama that her little girl was in 'burlesque.'"

"What's burlesque" Mama asked. The friend gave her a not too gentle description and the impression that working burlesque was a notch or two below working the red light district."

"Mama was off to New York quicker than you could say 'Take it off!'" You can imagine my surprise to see her sitting in the front row. After the performance she came backstage and in her Neopolitan accent said "Well, I guess it is alright, so long as they look and no touch."

"My greatest disappointment was that my Mother did not live to see me graduate from burlesque. My fondest and most grateful memory is that I able to take my Mother back to her home town in Italy—a tiny village on the outskirts of Naples—for a memorial visit. She passed away shortly after our return from that trip which was in 1939."

It was only a matter of time after her first appearances that she was on the front page of the newspapers hailed as "The girl with the epic epidermus, the favorite stripper of most of the college students and also the diplomatic corps."

As a result of her being called one of the most beautiful women on the stage, she was asked to play summer theatres in 1940 and she went "legit" when she appeared in "White Cargo" and "The Barker" in several summer theatres.

Her impish mood never disappeared, she insisted on a program note which said:

"Any similarity between Miss Corio's acting and





CALL OF THE JUNGLE



WHITE CARGO



SULTAN'S DAUGHTER

that of Katherine Cornell is strictly accidental!"

On her first night in "White Cargo," in her territory, Cambridge, Massachusetts, she made show-business history. She made her first appearance just before the ending of the first act, clad chiefly in brown powder, and she said: "I am Tondeleyo."

The curtain fell and a Harvard student jumped up and shouted "Wow! What an actress!"

Miss Corio made a number of pictures in Hollywood where she became known as "Queen of the Quickies," because of the 6 day shooting schedule on her movies for which she received \$10,000 a week plus 20% of the profits.

Her remarks to the press about her movies: "My pictures weren't released—they escaped." "They don't want them good—they want them Tuesday!" "Most of my pictures were Jungle films—it got so I couldn't pass a tree without an urge to climb it!"

An astute business woman, she has wisely invested her earnings in annuities, blue chip stocks and real estate. She is also a presiding officer of 3 big business corporations.



ANN CORIO  
by  
Varga

SWAMP WOMAN (JACK LA RUE)



JUNGLE SIREN  
(BUSTER CRABBE)



JUNGLE VENTURE





ANN CORIO visits the old Howard Theatre the day after it was gutted by fire. A peculiarity of the fire is the poster shown in this photo — although many other posters — which were pasted OVER the above one — burned off, the fire stopped when it reached the Corio poster.

Reprinted through the courtesy of the Boston Herald-Tribune

"We have heard from those who have worked with her that Miss Corio is an intriguing personality in her own right apart from her professional glamour—high strung and sensitive she possesses a peculiar passion for poetry and something of a talent for writing it. She is inclined to be serious minded in her conversation concerned with problems that have nothing to do with her art."

E. HART, DAYTON NEWS

"There is one thing she does not seek, that is the knack of being glamorous. Her taste in clothes is simple. She prefers black well cut frocks for daytime, white, pastels and blacks for evening wear. Furs are a weakness. Her wardrobe includes a mink coat, an ermine jacket, a silver fox jacket, a beaver coat, a white fox coat, a full length ermine cape, a mink jacket, a silver fox scarf and a sable scarf."

RUTH QUINT, NEW HAVEN REGISTER

"Ann has more 'It' than any person we have ever interviewed. It is not alone her gracious loveliness, her courteous consideration, chestnut brown hair, expressive, soulful eyes, graceful manner, unaffected elegance or the aura of her presence that positively magnetizes the unsuspecting—it is her remarkable fund of knowledge and especially intellectual rather than physical appeal that commands rapt attention and admiration. Five minutes conversation with Corio is an education."

HENRY MARCUS, "IT MAGAZINE"

We'll remind you that Ann is Harvard's baby and official sweetheart of the University of Pennsylvania campus. That she is noted for her charities and is a Dodger fan. That her hobbies are reading, golf, swimming, horseback riding. That she never diets and never weighs herself but eats sensibly and sleeps at least eight hours a day.

BUFFALO COURIER

During tea with Professor Hooton, Ann Corio who realized her host was a noted anthropologist, asked him how he could explain the unusual amount of deafness in New England.

"That's peculiar" said Dr. Hooton, "I've never heard of that. What's your authority?"

"Our box office treasurer," answered Miss Corio, "he tells me he never heard so many people ask for seats up front because they were hard of hearing."

LEONARD LYONS, NEW YORK POST

She has met important persons of the political, diplomatic, literary, sports, and theatrical world. To enjoy such popularity she gives more than beauty. She is a clever conversationalist. Notables who have met Corio as a publicity stunt have remained her friends through a community of interest. She's the kind of a person anybody can be proud to include in his or her circle of friends. Her dressing room when she appears in New York is like Grand Central Station. You're apt to find almost anybody there from Vivien Leigh to Yogi Berra.

When she came back from her trip to Europe a few years ago she had some interesting observations to report on the political situation. She started preaching: "Prepare Democracies."

When Ann Corio speaks people listen. She's really an amazing young woman!

JULIAN R. TUTHILL, HARTFORD TIMES

Ann Corio the Educated Striptease Pursues Proust Philosophy . . . and Buys her Own Mink.

"Beauty" says Ann Corio "comes from within."

Ann's got both from within and without.

She's got a lot of other things too. She's got a touch and go brand of conversation that catapults one laugh line after another. She's got intelligence and forthright manner without the least brand of affectation.

She was dressed in a slacks outfit of soft blue gingham with a striped blouse. Her shiny auburn hair (which she coils herself) was twisted up under a yellow crownless turban.

. . . "Truthfully I have very simple tastes; I'd rather eat a hamburger at a diner with someone I like than drink champagne at the Ritz with a millionaire. I prefer solitude to boredom." She said she speaks Italian, French, Spanish . . . and a smattering of "English."

PROVIDENCE EVENING BULLETIN





# Who's Who

## STEVE MILLS

STEVE MILLS is a Bostonian who made his Broadway debut in the Messrs. Shubert musical, *Three Little Girls*, at the Shubert Theatre. Prior to this opus, in which he played a principal comedy part, Mr. Mills was a headline comedian at almost every burlesque theatre in the metropolitan area. His dossier also lists long experience in the fields of vaudeville, night clubs and tabloid shows. Mr. Mills is considered the TOP of all Top Bananas. He was starring in night clubs when Miss Corio summoned him to star in *This Was Burlesque*.

## BOZO

BOZO, the company mascot, is shown here with Miss Corio. He is named after the great Immortal Bozo Snyder. Shortly after "This Was Burlesque" opened in New York in 1962, a forlorn stray kitten strolled into the theatre and was immediately adopted by the entire company. Of all the Broadway shows playing at the time, he chose "TWB" which proves that cats are smart.

When the show went on tour in June of 1965, Bozo took to traveling like he had invented travelers checks. He has special permission to travel in the cabin of Jet Airline along with the two legged people. A subject of several syndicated news stories, Bozo was also televised by NBC in a recent news special. He appears during the performance whenever the fancy suits him. If you should meet Bozo, please treat him like people — he doesn't know he is a cat.



## MICHAEL P. IANNUCCI

PRODUCER

MICHAEL P. IANNUCCI is a graduate of Westchester College, Westchester, Pa. where he majored in science and physical education. A professional football player, he turned to show business in the summer of 1958 when he operated a summer theatre in Bristol, Pa. and later in Philadelphia. It was when Miss Corio appeared at his theatres and broke all boxoffice records, out-drawing some of the theatres top personalities that Mr. Iannucci conceived the idea of starring her in a burlesque-type show. *This Was Burlesque* is the result. His football career included a short term with the Pittsburgh Steelers.



# Hello BURLESQUE TOP PRICE \$4.95 "it's so nice to have you back where you belong!"

## New York World-TelegramThe SunThis Is 'Burlesque': Fun With Ann Corio



### The Pittsburgh Press

Editorial Page

#### Good Clean Show

ANN CORIO, one of the truly great talents of burlesque, sharing honors with many other outstanding performers of the American stage, has moved her highly successful off-Broadway production, "This Was Burlesque," to uptown New York and taken a year's lease on the Hudson theater, 44th Street.

She will compete with a number of successful musicals now running at prices ranging up to \$9.80 per seat. Miss Corio will retain the same price level that prevailed at the downtown Casino East theater.

It is a bold move but experienced midtown producers, some at least, have predicted success for the Corio venture where many other hopefuls have failed, first, because seat prices are within reason; second, because "This Was Burlesque" is a clean show and fit family entertainment, and perhaps most important because in three years of standing room only audiences at the Casino East, the production grossed almost three million dollars.

Ann Corio is to burlesque what Ethel Merman is to musical comedy, what Peggy Lee is to night club audiences, what Joan Crawford was to movies and what Maria Callas is to grand opera. And because she has incorporated all that was good in burlesque to her enterprise and discarded anything of a questionable nature, her effort on Broadway with prices from \$2 to a top of \$3.95 should appeal to New Yorkers as well as out-of-town visitors.



NEW YORK

## Herald Tribune

### Even on Broadway, It's Still Burlesque

#### "THIS WAS BURLESQUE"

Hudson Theater. A new revue in two acts and twenty-five scenes, based on Ann Corio's collection, costumes by Rex Huntington, set, lighting, and production supervised and staged by Miss Corio, choreography by Paul Marshall, presented by Alvin Karpis (producer). The cast includes: Steve Mills, Harry Connel, Dick Berni, Paul West, Mac Dennis, Dexter Maitland, Kitty Lynne and Marilyn Marshall.

By Judith Crist

Well, not to worry, folks. The move uptown hasn't hurt "This Was Burlesque" one bit. It's still the same wonderfully awful melange of baggy pants, bare babes and bad jokes that has been thriving off-Broadway for the last three years. It's samey and blue and about as explicit as strippers and lowdown comedians can get—but as Steve Mills notes, when Paul West advises that "You got to be genteel!"—"I should change my religion!" And devout or not to the nostalgia of burlesque, you'll find yourself laughing yourself silly at an excerpt from "White Cargo" and the total delights

of "Crazy House," the all-cast foray into insanity, reveling in the chorus, relishing Miss Corio and admiring the logistics of the ladies who take it off.

Miss Corio is on hand to introduce the acts, offering program notes on Chicago-style stripping and the difference between strippers and exotics, to participate in a number of skills (there's life in her old Tondelayo yet!) and finally show, lovely legs and all, that she is indeed the maestro when it comes to undressing.

It's the top bananas, of course, who are the raucous delights. Steve Mills, whose pants are the ultimate in baggy, is the toppest of the bunch, a sort of wizened and toothless Margaret Rutherford who can epitomize lechery at its most futile. He and Paul West, an elegant straightman and marvelously mad plantation overseer in the



Herman Hadel. Last night Ann Corio's durable "This Was Burlesque" moved from off-Broadway, where it had done right nicely these past three years, to the Hudson Theater on W. 44th St.

That kind of diversion had been exiled from the Times Square area—yes, from all of New York—by the late Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia almost a quarter-century ago, so its return is noteworthy, like the first crocus. Maybe now they'll change the title to "This Is Burlesque."

Danny's TV show wasn't very satisfactory; it merely showed what burlesque would have looked like if it had sponsors. There were touches of truth here and there, but mostly it was a pretend revue. Eviscerated—no guts.

Of course, TV is a family medium, and Danny tried to justify by claiming that when he was a boy burlesque was for Mom, Pop and the kids. Wholesome-like.

That I don't buy, Danny is only a year older than I am, so we must have been boys at about the same time, although maybe he grew up faster. He was introduced to burlesque a lot sooner, having worked as a candy butcher at the Empire Theater in Toledo when he was only 9.

At that time, all I knew about burlesque came from a kid up the street who looked old for his age. And any jolly suggestion at home, that we all trek down to one of Rochester's two burlesque houses, would have earned me a belt on the ear. It wasn't family entertainment for my family.

By contrast, Miss Corio's entertainment isn't "family" and is authentic, with some reservations. Gone, perhaps,



Steve Mills, Calie Bishop in "This Was Burlesque."

is that weekend late show exuberance, when the damsels came out without those minimal concessions to modesty—pasties and G-string.

Also, Miss Corio's girls are young, tender and bright-eyed, which was not always the case way back when. For complete authenticity, there should be a few sinewy, weathered, hags and flaccid frumps who formerly bumped and ground as if they were uprooting stumps. Bless Miss Corio for not going that far into historical detail. Her youngsters are cute.

For the record, I was not one of the cheerleaders when Miss Corio exhumed burlesque and propped it up on the stage of a desolate old mausoleum down on Second Ave. three years and a week ago.

Nor am I hollering hosannas now. Nevertheless, the show has brightened, the house is more suitable, and

for all I know, I might have mellowed. There is a lot of fun to be had at the Hudson.

The best of this revitalized revue is to be found in the comedians and straightmen, Steve Mills, Dexter Maitland, Mac Dennis, Dick Berni and Harry Conley. The traditional "Crazy House" can be wild farce when it's working right, and it was working right last night. Mills' crusty Englishman to Miss Corio's Tondelayo in "White Cargo" is a comedy classic. Mills and West's "When You and I Were Young Maggie" charms everybody.

Nicole Jaffee, the chubby, gum-chewing chorine, makes quite a hit, and the strippers are unspeakably energetic. Miss Corio, once a real star of burlesque here and on the road, appears in a number of beautiful gowns and winds up the evening with her own specially-matured, but still graceful,



Steve Mills and Ann Corio in "This Was Burlesque."

"White Cargo" bit, offer some show-stopping harmony that shows what old pros can do with even older standards. But it's Harry Conley, a Palace prince indeed, who can reel off the jokes that nobody dares tell any more and everyone splits a gut over. His distaste on the stupidities of an impassive wife and his "Crazy House" assortment of riddles are high points of low comedy.

The impassive wife is a plump blonde delight named Nicole Jaffee, who's the most disorganized of the totally disorganized chorus line. Miss Jaffee never misses a beat with her chewing gum and never one with the band, but her enthusiastic ramblings provide a glorious burlesque of all that was burlesque.

The rest of the Cuties are a luscious and varied assortment of pretty girls who are a choreographer's nightmare and any man's daydream. One

of them, Maria Bradley, a comely brunette, demonstrates her art as a neophyte stripper. Variations of the art are subsequently provided by Kitty Lynne, a platinum blonde who demonstrates the fine point of exotic dancing and punctuates it with meows and purring; Marilyn Marshall, a golden blonde who, in the tradition of Carrie Fennell, can keep four tassels in action at once; and Tina Kay, a tall titan blonde who gives out with Chicago-style enthusiasm and getters for helpful gentlemen in the front rows.

The ladies all look as disinterested as the tradition requires, the bananas are as slickly inept as years in the business have made them and the evening is as untidy and relaxed and mindlessly amusing as in the old days. The girls are getting younger, the jokes are getting older—and the fans can have a ball.





Backstage at THIS WAS BURLESQUE always looks like a celebrity gathering. Friends June Haver and James Mason tell Ann how much they enjoyed her.



Red Skelton clowns it up with Ann and two of her top bananas.

At a reception at Gracie Mansion, New York's then Mayor Bob Wagner greets Ann Corio and another guest, the T.V., movie and stage actor, Paul Ford.

